

Glenda Wiles

From: Vanessa Perry
Sent: Tuesday, October 02, 2007 4:37 PM
To: Commissioners Department
Subject: FW: Stream setback proposal

From: Planning
Sent: Tuesday, October 02, 2007 4:34 PM
To: Vanessa Perry
Subject: FW: Stream setback proposal

Ravalli County Planning Department
 215 S. 4th St., Suite F
 Hamilton, MT 59840
 Phone (406) 375-6530, Fax (406) 375-6531
planning@ravallicounty.mt.gov

From: Bob Simpson [<mailto:bsimpson@cybernet1.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 02, 2007 4:33 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Stream setback proposal

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Ravalli County Commissioners

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Bob Simpson, Outdoor Writer
 4500 Termite Lane, Morehead City, NC. 28557
 250 Meadowlark Lane, Hamilton, Mt. 59840
 cell phone 252-646-4799

Ravalli County Commissioners

Ravalli County Planning Board 2 October 07

I have just received a letter requesting that I, as a property owner living alongside Skalkaho Creek, register my objections to the proposed (stream) setback regulations.

Having lived and owned various properties with stream and other waterside access, including my present home near (a couple hundred yards distant) Skalkaho for about 20 years, I have found it is very difficult to protect these natural resources from "development".

Permitting waterside construction always encourages runoff and pollution of our public waters.

Furthermore, I have found that local, state and federal governments have always been expected to, and will, come to the rescue of home and businesses built on the flood plains, thus putting an undue and unfair burden on other taxpayers when disaster strikes.

I've also found developing such sites invariably results in speculators requesting special protection, including subsidizing of insurance. This always happens following natural (yet foreseeable) disasters, such as Katrina, or more local such as excess snow, with melt runoff, and rainstorms. The damage being greatly magnified whenever development was allowed, often even encouraged in flood zones.

I have heard the argument that individual property rights are being deprived from individuals and development being discouraged from many investors. I suggest one look at the tremendous costs to the

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taxpayers incurred in other areas such as Padre Island, the Florida and Carolina beaches, the ill-considered development along most every river and stream bank from the Red River of the North, the Missouri and Ohio, to the banks of the Mississippi that has taken place when leaders failed to establish base lines before irreversible development was underway. These sites are now demanding public subsidization such as “beach nourishment” protective flood dikes, shore stabilization, dams and ditching — all at the taxpayers expense.

No matter how sympathetic one is with the victims (as Katrina destruction), what can one expect when homes are built in developments located 9 feet below sea level, — relying on publicly funded dikes and sea walls to protect them from a long history of storm and flood? Once development on such sensitive locations has been permitted it is nearly impossible to remove, despite the most sincere hindsight.

Anything that can be done to keep our streams as near pristine and unaltered will in the long run prove beneficial socially and economically to the entire community, state and nation.

I would recommend establishing a very high valuation and placing heavy taxation upon developers who build in flood plains and close to waterways, while rewarding those who do not. Thanks.

Robert D Simpson
250 Meadow Lark Lane
Hamilton, Mt.